

THE REFUGEES

By A. CONAN DOYLE,

Author of "The Return of Sherlock Holmes"

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But his energetic comrade had yielded to no feeling of despondency. The instant that the clang of the prison door had assured him that he was safe from interruption he had felt all round the walls and flooring to see what manner of place this might be. His search had ended in the discovery of a small fireplace at one corner and of two great clumsy billets of wood, which seemed to have been left there to serve as pillows for the prisoners. Having satisfied himself that the chimney was so small that it was utterly impossible to pass even his head up it, he drew the two blocks of wood over to the window and was able by placing one above the other and standing on tiptoe on the highest to reach the bars which guarded it. Drawing himself up and fixing one toe in an inequality of the wall, he managed to look out on to the courtyard which they had just quitted. The carriage and the Vivonne were passing out through the gate as he looked, and he heard a moment later the slam of the heavy door and the clatter of hoofs from the troop of horsemen outside. The sentinels and his retainers had disappeared; the torches, too, were gone, and save for the measured tread of a pair of sentinels in the yard twenty feet beneath him, all was silent throughout the great castle.

The window was large enough to pass his body through if it were not for those bars. He shook them and hung his weight upon them, but they were as thick as his thumb and firmly welded; then, getting some strength hold for his other foot, he supported himself by one hand, while he picked with his knife at the setting of the iron. It was cement, as smooth as glass and as hard as marble. His knife turned when he tried to loosen it. But there was still the stone. It was sandstone, not so very hard. If he could cut grooves in it he might be able to draw out bars, cement and all. He sprang down to the floor again and was thinking how he should best set to work when a groan drew his attention to his companion.

"Something on your mind?" said Amos Green, sitting down upon his billets of wood. "What was it, then?" The guardsman here made a movement of impatience. "What was it? How can you ask me when you know as well as I do the wretched failure of my mission? It was the king's wish that the archbishop should marry them. The archbishop should have been at the palace by now. Ah, I can see the king's cabinet, I can see him waiting. I can hear the unhappy De Catnat."

"I see all that," said the American stolidly, "and I see something more." "What then?"

"I see the archbishop tying them up, together."

"He could not be at the palace." "On the contrary, he reached the palace about half an hour ago."

De Catnat sprang to his feet. At the palace?" he screamed. "Then who gave him the message?"

"I did," said Amos Green.

If the American had expected to surprise or delight his companion by this curt announcement he was woefully disappointed, for De Catnat approached him with a face which was full of sympathy and trouble.

"My dear friend," said he, "I have been selfish and thoughtless. That fall from your horse has shaken you more than you think. Lie down upon this straw and see if a little sleep may not."

"I tell you that the bishop is there!" cried Amos Green.

"He is, he is," said De Catnat soothingly. "He is most certainly there. I trust that you have no pain?"

The American raved in the air with his knotted fists. "You think that I'm crazed," he cried, "and, by the eternal, you are enough to make me so! When I say that I sent the bishop I mean that I saw to the job. You remember when I stepped back to your friend the major?"

It was the soldier's turn to grow excited now. "Well?" he cried, gripping the other's arm.

"Well, when we send a scout into the woods, if the matter is worth it, we send a second one at another hour, and so one or other comes back with his hair on. That's the troquais fashion, and a good fashion too."

"My God, I believe that you have saved me!"

"I went back to the major then, and I asked him when he was in Paris to pass by the archbishop's door. I showed him this lump of chalk. 'If we've been there,' said I, 'you'll see a great cross on the left side of the doopost. If there's no cross, then pull the latch and ask the bishop if he'll come up to the palace as quick as his horses can bring him.' The major started an hour after us. He would be in Paris by half past 10; the bishop would be in Versailles by 11, and he would reach Carcass half an hour ago—that is to say, about half past 12. By the Lord, I think I've driven him off his head!"

De Catnat spun round the cell now, waving his arms and his legs, with his shadow capering up the wall behind him, all distorted in the moonlight. "Oh, if I could but do something for you!" he exclaimed.

"You can, then. Lie down on that straw and go to sleep."

So weary was the young guardsman that it was long past noon and the sun was shining out of a cloudless blue sky before he awoke. For a moment, enveloped as he was in straw, and with the rude arch of the dungeon meeting in four rough hewn groins above his head, he stared about him in bewilderment. Then in an instant the doings of the day before, his mission, the ambuscade, his imprisonment, all flashed back to him, and he sprang to his feet. His comrade, who had been dozing in the corner, jumped up also at the first movement, with his hand on his knife and a sinister glance directed toward the door.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" said he. "I thought it was the man. They brought those two loaves and a jug of water just about dawn, when I was settling down for a rest."

"And did he say anything?"

"No; it was the little black one."

"Simon, they called him."

"The same. He laid the things down and was gone. I thought that maybe if he came again we might get him to stop. Maybe if we got these stirrup leathers round his ankles he would tell us where we are and what is to be done with us."

"Pshaw! What does it matter since our mission is done?"

"It may not matter to you—there's no accounting for tastes—but it matters a good deal to me. I'm not used to sitting in a hole, like a bear in a trap, waiting for what other folks choose to do with me."

"There's no help but patience, my friend."

"I don't know that. I'd get more help out of a bar and a few pegs."

He opened his coat and took out a short piece of rusted iron and three small, thick pieces of wood, sharpened at one end.

"Where did you get those, then?"

"These are my night's work. The bar is the top one of the grate. I had a job to loosen it, but there it is. The pegs I whittled out of that log. You see, peg number one goes in here, where I have picked a hole between the stones. Then I've made this other log into a mallet, and with two cracks there it is firm fixed so that you can put your weight on it. Now these two go in the same way into the holes above here. So! Now, you see, you can stand up there and look out of that window without asking too much of your toe joint. Try it."

De Catnat sprang up and looked eagerly out between the bars.

"I do not know the place," said he, shaking his head. "It may be any one of thirty castles which lie upon the south side of Paris and within six or seven leagues of it."

He was dropping back to the floor and put his weight upon the bar. To his amazement it came away in his hand.

"Look, Amos; look!" he cried.

"Ah, you've found it out! Well, I did that during the night. I could make no way with my knife, but when I got the bar out of the grate I managed faster. I'll put this one back now, or some of those folk down below may notice that we have got it loose."

"Are they all loose?"

"Only the one at present, but we'll get the other two out during the night. You can take that bar out and work with it while I use my own picker at the other. You see, the stone is soft, and by grinding it you soon make a groove along which you can slip the bar. It will be mighty queer if we can't clear a road for ourselves before morning."

"Well, but even if we could get out into the courtyard where could we turn to then?"

"One thing at a time, friend. Anyway, there is more air in the yard than in here, and when the window is clear we shall soon plan out the rest."

The two comrades did not dare to do any work during the day for fear they should be surprised by the jailer or observed from without. The instant that night fell they were both up upon the pegs, grinding away at the hard stone and tugging at the bars. It was a rainy night, and there was a sharp thunderstorm, but they could see very well, while the shadow of the arched window prevented their being seen. Before midnight they had loosened one bar, and the other was just beginning to give when some slight noise made them turn their heads, and there was their jailer standing, open mouthed, in the middle of the cell, staring up at them.

It was De Catnat who observed him first, and he sprang down at him in an instant with his bar, but at his movement the man rushed for the door and drew it after him just as the American's tool whizzed past his ear and down the passage.

"It is scarce worth while to go on," said De Catnat.

"We may as well be doing that as anything else. If my picker had been an inch lower I'd have had him. Well, maybe he'll get a stroke or break his neck down those stairs. I've nothing to work with now, but a few rubs with your bar will finish the job. Ah, dear, you are right, and we are fairly freed!"

(To be Continued.)

Out of nearly 220,000 miles of railways in the United States, only 4,000 miles are equipped with block signals.

KAISER'S TASK CHRISTMAS TIME

Customs of Observing Day in Germany's Royal Home

Giant Tree Gaily Decorated for Imperial Family—Kaiser Speaks To All.

BESCHERUNG AN INSTITUTION.

The Beschuerung (as the distribution of gifts under the spreading Christmas tree is called in Germany) is divided into two parts. First comes one for the members of the imperial household, from the nearest kitchen scullion upwards, and this takes place in a large gallery of the Neues Palais. Hundreds of small tables are placed there, each covered with presents, and the whole scene is dominated by a Christmas tree, a perfect giant of its kind, and magnificently vivid with its myriad of vari-colored candles, stars and crescents of gold and silver, crystal icicles, iridescent snowballs, and hundreds of other glittering baubles. Each and every one of the servants, higher and lower officials, is spoken to personally by the kaiser and kaiserin, and the meritorious old servants are slapped on the shoulder and greeted with a few kindly phrases. The bowing and scraping, hand-kissing and formal expressions of thanks, having at last come to a close, the second part of the Beschuerung takes place.

That is the one exclusively for the imperial family themselves. It always takes place in the Muschelsaal—that immense hall in the Neues Palais, the decoration of which is in mother-of-pearl and beautiful seashells and clusters of coral of every kind. For this evening the hall is bordered on each side by evergreens, holly, and mistletoe, forming two graceful hedges wherein dark green is enlivened by scarlet berries, making a fine effect. A beautiful little structure representative of the Manger, showing the Christ-child, the Virgin Mother and the Shepherd King in adoration, is set up in a corner of the hall. This is always the special task of the kaiser himself.

When the Beschuerung is in full blast everywhere are heard cries of "Oh!" and "Ah!" Delight, surprise and gratitude on all sides. Mother and father smothered under a shower of kisses, their children running to and fro, inspecting breathlessly newly unearthed treasures or eyeing those of brother and sister. Most captivating the stern kaiser is then. Standing before his own "lay-out," he shows all the boyish good nature and curiosity of his sons—poking his nose into this box or that case, making pretense of being unable to untie a parcel wrapped up with particular cunning, glancing through some new books or a portfolio of rare prints, smiling, laughing and shouting, and being a child again among children. —Wolf von Schierbrand in December Lippincott's.

The American Magazine Has Changed Hands.

For 30 years it was Leslie's popular monthly.

Ida M. Tarbell, who wrote Lincoln and the famous "Story of Rockefeller," William Allen White, the well known Kansas editor, F. P. Dunne, creator of "Mr. Dooley," Ray Stannard Baker and Lincoln Steffens are under the leadership of John S. Phillips, now editing The American Magazine.

Never before has such a brilliant group been gathered together, and they are not only contributing themselves, but are filling the magazine with the very best novels and short stories and great timely articles by other famous writers and beautiful pictures by great artists.

A Great Bargain. The regular price for the twelve numbers of The American Magazine is \$1.20—little enough as it is, but for a limited time you can get the November and December, 1906, numbers, with a full year's subscription for 1907, for a dollar, or

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Hard Times. A thief broke into a millionaire's mansion early the other morning and found himself in the music room. Hearing footsteps approaching, he took refuge behind a screen.

From 8 to 9 o'clock the eldest daughter had a singing lesson.

From 9 to 10 o'clock the second daughter took a piano lesson.

From 10 to 11 o'clock the eldest son had a violin lesson.

From 11 to 12 the other son had

a lesson on the flute. At 12:15 all the brothers and sisters assembled and studied an ear-splitting piece for voice, piano, violin and flute.

The thief staggered out from behind the screen at 12:45, and, falling at their feet, cried:

"For heaven's sake, have me arrested!"

Couldn't Find It. Gov. Hoch, of Kansas, never took any stock in the rain-makers, who in years past picked up a good deal of money from farmers in the Sunflower state. At one time the residents of Marion were subscribing to pay for some rain-making experiments.

Mr. Hoch declined to chip in, and an elderly deacon quoted feelingly: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Hoch replied: "I recognize the quotation, but let me remind you of another: 'A fool and his money are soon parted.' Don't forget that." "Where do you find that in the Scriptures?" asked the deacon. "Why, in Bartholomew 11:15," answered Hoch, moving away. The deacon and his friends hunted up a Bible and not for some time did they discover that there was no such book in the scriptures.

Origin of the Rothschilds. The founder of the Rothschild family, Amsechel Moses Rothschild, kept a coin store at 152 Judengasse—or Jewish quarter—Frankfort-on-the-Main. Before this shop was displayed a red shield (hence the name—Rothschild). Amsechel dealt in curiosities, art goods and old gold and silver.

His son, Mayer Amsechel, was born in 1742 and died in 1812. He like his father, continued in the coin business. In the course of his coin business he met a collector, the court banker to the Landgrave of Hesse. This banker was so impressed by Mayer's business ability that he loaned him money for investment, and it was in this way that the great banking firm of Rothschild was established. —Elder Monthly.

SEE MEXICO. An opportunity is offered a limited number of desirable persons to tour Old Mexico in special Pullman palace cars.

A personally conducted tour, starting January 15th, by representatives familiar with every point of historic interest on the route. The itinerary covers a period of thirty days of sight-seeing and is unusually complete, satisfactory and interesting. The cost of the tour is very low and members of the party absolutely relieved of all responsibility regarding arrangements. If interested write us for particulars at once.

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Christmas and New Year Holiday Rates.

The Illinois Central R. R. Co. will sell tickets to all points on their line and to all points south of the Ohio and Potomac rivers, and east of the Mississippi river, also to various points in the west, northwest and southwest. Rate one and one-third fare plus 25 cents. Dates of sale December 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and January 1st, 1907, final limit 7th, 1907. For further particulars apply to

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Dead Flies.

Few people probably know that dead flies have a commercial value. As reported from London, they come annually in barrels to the English capital, where they are sold at auction and finally serve as food for birds and goldfish. They come from Brazil, where they hover close above the surface of the Amazon river, and are caught in nets by the fishermen. Until recently a pound of dead flies cost in London fivepence, but the growing demand, for which there is no corresponding supply, has increased the price to a shilling and a half a pound.—New York Tribune.

"Don't your conscience sometimes trouble you about things you have to do in financial deals?" "A little," answered Mr. Dustin Stax. "What do you do in such a case?" "I send for a lawyer."—Washington Star.

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Striking Miners and Guards Engage in Terrific Battle Christmas Eve.

FEUD IS OF LONG STANDING

DEAD AND WOUNDED. C. J. DOUGHERTY, mine guard, killed.

BILLIE MALLOY, miner, killed. WILL GRAY, miner, killed.

L. I. MOORE, mine guard, four wounds, will die.

SAM BARNEY, miner, three wounds, dying.

WILLIAM GOOCH, miner, shot in arm.

HENRY DELANEY, miner, shot in leg.

Sturgis, Ky., Dec. 26.—Three men were killed and four probably fatally wounded in a battle Monday night between guards employed by the West Kentucky Coal company and the striking miners at this place.

Of the wounded one man is not expected to live until morning. The other wounded are under guard in the office of the coal company by fifteen members of the union.

The fight occurred in a downtown street and a half mile from the mine. Just what precipitated the battle cannot be learned as it broke out suddenly and continued until fully twenty-five shots had been fired. Immediately after the firing had ceased owners of stores and shops looked up their places and the town was quiet with the exception of the force of miners standing guard over the wounded men.

The members of the miners' union have been on a strike for a year and two months. The West Kentucky company has been working non-union men under guards almost constantly and serious trouble has been expected.

Roller Skating.

"Did you ever notice the number of men walking around with their hands behind their backs?" demanded a local club man who prides himself on being observant. Receiving a negative reply, the observant man continued: "Keep your eyes opened—you'll be surprised to see how many there are. I've got the answer, too. Roller skating is the cause. Your roller skater—and there are thousands of him—of course, likes to look easy and graceful gliding around with his hands behind him, as though he wasn't making an effort. The habit clings when he gets off his wheels. I see a lot of girls and women who also unconsciously assume the position of a skater while walking on the street."—Philadelphia Record.

Why the Lecture Ended.

A certain professor was giving his pupils a lecture on "Scotland and the Scots." "These hardy men," he said, "think nothing of swimming across the Tay three times every morning before breakfast."

Suddenly a loud burst of laughter came from the center of the hall, and the professor, amazed at the idea of any one daring to interrupt him in the middle of his lecture, angrily asked the offender what he meant by such conduct.

"I was just thinking, sir," replied the lad, "that the poor Scotch clans would find themselves on the wrong side for their clothes when they landed."—November Lippincott's.

Over the River Weddings.

Squire Lixzett of Metropolis, had another busy day Monday, when four couples from Paducah presented themselves before him, armed with marriage licenses. The couples were Les Barnhart and Martha Nickles, James Watson and Rosa Thomas, Charles Franklin and Crena Clark, George Jenkins and Amelia Nall. They went down on the Cowling.

Good Friends.

Gretchen (to best friend)—You were wrong, you see, when you said Mr. Smith did not care for me! Yesterday he asked me to marry him and declared he could eat me up!

Lula.—I congratulate you. I had always heard that his favorite dish was goose.—Translated for Transatlantic Tales from Mergendorfer Blatter.

At the Matrimonial Agency. "Madame, I have picked out a charming husband for you. Only I warn you he is a thorough sportsman, fond of automobilism, mountain-climbing, bicycling and ballooning."

Applicant (thoughtfully)—"Can't you give me something that lasts longer?"—Translated for Transatlantic Tales from Filigende Blatter.

Ethel—"Good morning, Mr. Jones. You don't seem to mind the heat?"

Jones (surlily)—"I should say not. All my friends have given me the cold shoulder."—Translated for Transatlantic Tales from Journal Amusant.

Lots of the money that men marry is counterfeit.

A Wonderful Record.

As made up by improved and exact processes Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription is a most efficient remedy for regulating all the womanly functions, correcting displacements, as prolapsus, anteversion and retroversion, overcoming painful periods, toning up the nerves and bringing about a perfect state of health. It cures the backache, periodical headaches, the dragging-down distress in the pelvic region, the pain and tenderness over lower abdominal region, dries up the pelvic catarrhal drains so disagreeable and weakening, and overcomes every form of weakness incident to the organs distinctly feminine.

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Clara Morris and Augustin Daly

In The American Magazine for December Clara Morris writes of a banquet given by her manager, Augustin Daly. Miss Morris was dressed in a black grenadine over which she and Daly had quarreled. At the banquet she was unexpectedly called upon for a speech—her first speech. Reading it almost makes your own knees shake!

Not the least interesting part of the story is Miss Morris' account of the spat she and Daly had before the banquet. Miss Morris refused to go because she possessed no suitable clothes.

"You only require a very simple dress," said Mr. Daly.

"Mr. Daly, you are acquainted with both my shabby street dresses. I have beside them only some night-dresses, and I fancy they are barred for a banquet."

"He was angry. I was sorry. 'Please, Mr. Daly, don't be vexed. I know no one in New York. I will never be missed.'"

"Then indeed the storm broke. He accused me of meanness incredible; that I wished by my absence to make of myself a 'dramatic Cinderella' to arouse the sympathy of the public—and with head up and eyes blinded with tears I walked out and home."

"Two sulky, sullen days, then—'Miss Morris, can you be ready in half an hour after curtain-fall, to ride over to the hotel with Mrs. Gilbert on Saturday night?'"

"I drew a long breath: 'I can't go, sir!'"

"You will go!"

"No sir! I have no desire to humiliate you or myself. You know I can't go to a banquet in a worn and shabby street dress."

"And you know you have only to name the establishment you favor to have a suitable costume at once! He drew a checkbook toward him. A sound, wordless sound came from my throat. He glanced up—startled—laughed a nervous little laugh, and exclaimed: 'You—you'll die on the scaffold if you're not careful!'"

"If I do, it will be for resenting an insult like this!"

"I beg your pardon; there's no insult in a manager providing for a dress."

"For a play, I broke in. 'You have provided two for me in the new play; but when a man pays for my personal clothing, that man will be my husband, not my manager!'"

There is a tremendous power in character when added to ability. A great many youths think that ability is everything, that if a man has brain power he can accomplish most anything; but he is a light-weight man, no matter how able, if he does not add character to his ability.—Success Magazine.

Some men find it takes less courage to face the world than to face their wives.

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